

of the gods, identified, in this part of the *Veda*, with Earth, or even with the Universe; in which case she is, evidently, allegorical. Little is said of the ADITYAS collectively; but some of them are individually addressed. There is no separate hymn to VISHNTJ ; but he is mentioned as TRIVIKRAMA, or he who took three steps or paces, which Mr. Colebrooke thought might have formed the groundwork of the *Paurdŵc* legend of the dwarf *Avatdm*. It may have been suggestive of the fiction : but no allusion to the notion of *Avatar as* occurs in the *Veda* ; and thjere can be little doubt that the three steps, here referred to, are the three periods of the sun's course—Ids rise, culmination, and setting MITHA is never addressed alone : he appears amongst the YISWADEVAS (or gods collectively), or associated with VARTJNA and ARYAMAN. He is said, by the Scho-liast, to be a divinity presiding over the day, and, in combination with VARUNA, a dispenser of water. VARUNA occupies a rather more conspicuous place in the hymns : he is said to be the divinity presiding over the night; and, in that capacity, probably, the constellations are called Ms holy acts, and the moon,

it is said, moves by his command. The title of king or monarch, *Raja* or *Samrat*, is very commonly attached to his name. "With MITRA, he is called the lord of light; and he supports the light on high, and makes wide the path of the sun: he grants wealth, averts

^a It is expressly so stated by *DurgdeMrya*, in Ms commentary on the *Nirukta*.—See Burnonf, Introduction to the 3rd vol. of the *BMgaiata-Z-urdna*, p, xsii.